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P FOR STEPHEN MULL, EAP/MTS FOR DANIEL DELK

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SUBJECT: TIMOR-LESTE: PRESIDENT RAMOS-HORTA CONDEMNS IRANIAN HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

REF: MULL 2/7/10 E-MAIL

¶1. (SBU) On February 8, DCM met with Jose Turquel, Foreign Policy Advisor to President Ramos-Horta, and, per ref instructions, urged the GOTL to issue a public statement condemning the ongoing human rights violations in Iran. On February 9, DCM conveyed the same message to Isilio Coelho, National Director for Multilateral and Bilateral Affairs at the MFA. Both Turquel and Coelho said that they share U.S. concerns and would raise the issue with their superiors.

¶2. (U) On February 13, President Ramos-Horta issued the following press release:

Begin Text:

President strongly condemns execution of activists in Iran

The President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Dr. Josi Ramos-Horta, strongly condemns the execution of the activists Mohammad Reza Ali-Zamani and Arash Rahmanipour, hanged January 28th, in Iran.

The two activists were accused of 'muharebeh' - blasphemy and armed insurrection against the Islamic Republic of Iran - and sentenced to death for their alleged involvement in the turmoil in the aftermath of the Presidential Elections in June 2009. The elections were won - allegedly through fraud - by Mr. Mahmud Ahmadinedjad, which guaranteed his second term as President of the Republic.

During the turmoil, thousands of activists were detained and 11 sentenced to death. Two of them, Mohammad Reza Ali-Zamani and Arash Rahmanipour, have already been hanged.

The Nobel Peace Prize Laureate is firmly against the death penalty, under any circumstances, and defends its abolition according to the resolution approved by the UN General Assembly in 2007.

Dr. Ramos-Horta appeals to the Iranian authorities to suspend immediately the sentences against the activists, as a first step to a moratorium of the death penalty.

The Iranian authorities must respect freedom of expression and association, states the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate.

The human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran will be discussed next Tuesday February 15th, at the HRC in Geneva, Switzerland.

End Text.

HENICK